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OPERATION TIDE TASK FORCE ARRESTS MEMBERS OF THE 'DETROIT THUG LORDZ'

DETROIT – United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy, Special Agent in Charge Valerie J. Goddard of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) and Detroit Police Chief Ella Bully-Cummings announced today the arrests of several members of an armed drug trafficking organization, once identified as the 'Detroit Thug Lordz,' or 'DTL,' operating in Detroit's Northwest District over the past few years. This TIDE (Tactical Intelligence Driven Enforcement) investigation, lead by ATF and DPD also received assistance from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA,) and the Michigan State Police (MSP.)

TIDE Task Force investigators identified fifteen members in the criminal drug organization. A 16-count federal indictment was unsealed today in the U.S. District Court, Eastern Judicial District of Michigan, identifying nine members for drug and firearm violations. Due to the ages of the remaining six members (all under 18 years of age) warrant requests are being presented to the Wayne County Prosecutor's Office.

The federal indictment includes 13 counts charging the distribution of crack cocaine, powder cocaine, and marijuana from May 2, 2006, to Feb. 13, 2007. The most serious charge, conspiracy to distribute more than 50 grams of crack cocaine, carries a 10-year mandatory minimum sentence. The indictment also charges two of the defendants, Isaias Quesada and Omar Jay Gladson, both of whom have previous felony convictions, with firearm violations.

Five members charged in the federal conspiracy, arrested this morning, are scheduled to make their initial appearances in federal court at 1:00 p.m. this afternoon. These defendants, all from Detroit, include: Isaias Quesada, 22 (head of the organization); Nicholas Jamie, 20; Shane Aben 18; Randi Carl Diggs, 18; and Karen Haskins, 49. Two additional federal defendants, Omar Jay Gladson, 19, and Rodolfo Moreno, 20 of Detroit, were already in custody on unrelated state charges. Two members considered fugitives at this time are; Michael Moreno, 18; and Hassan Aljibory, 20.

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“These outcomes have only been possible due to the shared intelligence and combined resources of my office and our federal, state and local law enforcement partners,” said Murphy. “Our greatest reward is seeing results like this from the commitment of these men and women to work together over the long-term for the greater good of our communities. Thanks to the funding made available through Project Safe Neighborhoods, we have been able to implement the intelligence-driven strategy of TIDE to fight gang activity.”

“This case highlights the success of the TIDE team approach. TIDE is an initiative that uses innovative technology, analytical investigative resources, and an integrated law enforcement strategy to identify, disrupt, arrest and prosecute the most violent criminals in Detroit. The federal indictments of these nine gang members, and the anticipated state prosecution of six others, will remove 15 additional gang members from our streets,” stated Goddard.

Detroit Police Chief Ella Bully-Cummings stated, “Operation TIDE has become a successful example of how city, state, and federal law enforcement agencies can work together to address emerging crime issues. The agencies benefit from the comprehensive sharing of information but the true success comes when residents are able to witness a shift in negative concerns that affect their quality of life. This is happening within the neighborhoods of the Northwest District.”

Project Safe Neighborhoods Operation TIDE is the unprecedented, long-term law enforcement and community collaboration where federal, state, county and local law enforcement officials meet regularly and work in cooperation to reduce violent crimes and prevent recidivism by focusing on the “worst of the worst” in Northwest Detroit, Detroit’s largest police district. Since its inception in May 2006, Operation TIDE has resulted in a 35 percent decrease in fatal and non-fatal shootings due, in part, to a total of 503 felony arrests and impromptu home visits to parolees. Other PSN Operation TIDE Task Force partners include the United States Marshal’s Service (USMS,) the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI,) the Wayne County Sheriff’s Department (WCSD,) the Wayne County Prosecutor’s Office (WCPO,) and the Michigan Department of Corrections (MDOC.)

For information about Project Safe Neighborhoods, contact Peggy Goodwin at 313.715.0199 or 800.891.8881 and visit www.psnworks.org. Citizens with information about illegal guns, gangs with guns, armed drug trafficking or the trafficking of illegal guns are encouraged to call 800.ATF.GUNS safely and with the ability to remain anonymous.

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